

REMARKS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated November 16, 2006, which set a three-month period for response, making this amendment due by February 16, 2007.

Claims 9-15 are pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 3, 7, and 8 were rejected under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper multiple dependent claim form and were not treated on the merits. Claims 1, 2, and 5 were provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 4 and 11 of copending Application No. US 2005/0139316. Claims 1, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,202,721 to Roberts. Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,236,714 to Traut and in further view of Roberts and U.S. Patent No. 5,725,711 to Taylor.

In the present amendment, the specification was amended to add a cross reference to the related priority document and to add standard headings. Claims 1-8 have been canceled, and new claims 9-15 have been added, which conform essentially to the claims allowed by the European Patent Office in a related European application, EP 1 472 089 B1.

To address the double patenting rejection, the Applicant files herewith a Terminal Disclaimer with regard to copending Application No. US 2005/0139316.

The Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 9-15 define a patentably distinct set of features that is neither anticipated by nor made obvious over the cited references. The Applicant further submits that the present application now stands in condition for allowance. Action to this end is courteously solicited.

Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to discuss appropriate claim language that will place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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